

Appl. No. 09/633,032
Supplemental Response. Dated Nov. 9, 2004

REMARKS

The courteous and helpful assistance extended by the Examiner to the undersigned during the personal interview conducted October 25, 2004 is acknowledged with appreciation.

At the interview, the Examiner indicated that after reviewing the above-mentioned Amendment she was favorably inclined to the revised claims and supporting arguments presented therein. However, she raised a technical question with regard to the Green reference and asked applicants for a clarification.

More specifically, the Examiner noted that independent claim 50 specifies a range of values for the Shore D hardness, and independent claim 51 specifies a range of values for the glass transition temperature. These values control how long a composition comprising a resin is exposed to ionizing irradiation in order to obtain a satisfactory precomposite.

The Examiner pointed to Example 4 in column 18 of Green which describes the preparation of a laminate and specifies that prepregs are irradiated for a certain range of time, with the result that variations in the interlaminar shear strength of the laminate were observed. The Examiner inquired whether there exists a relationship between interlaminar shear strength and Shore D hardness and/or between interlaminar shear strength and the glass transition temperature so as to yield data points that fall within the claimed ranges. In other words, if the interlaminar shear strength were converted to Shore D hardness and/or glass transition temperature in accordance with such a relationship, would the converted value fall within the ranges specified in claim 50 and/or claim 51?

The inventors have considered this question and, to their best knowledge and belief, they are unaware of a mathematical relationship between interlaminar shear strength and the Shore D hardness, nor of a mathematical relationship between interlaminar shear strength and the glass transition temperature to predictably convert from one value of, say, Shore D hardness to a value of

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interlaminar shear strength. Thus, it is not possible to convert the values in Example 4 for the interlaminar shear strength into either a value of Shore D hardness or a value of glass transition temperature.

It is worthwhile noting another significant difference between the present claimed invention and Example 4 of Green. As has been explained above, the specified values of Shore D hardness or glass transition temperature are used in the course of preparing a precomposite, or prepreg. In sharp contrast thereto, the values of the interlaminar shear strength specified in Example 4 are characteristic of the final product, i.e. the laminate, which was prepared from a prepreg. To summarize this point in brief, the present invention uses the specified values as process variables applied to form a satisfactory prepreg, whereas Green's specified values are characteristics of the final product. The two are really unrelated. This is a significant difference and further supports the patentability of the present invention over Green.

Based on the information provided above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 50 and 51 are clearly patentable over Green. All the remaining pending claims are dependent upon either claim 50 or claim 51 and, thus, are patentable as well.

Prompt and favorable action leading to allowance of the present application is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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